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Christmas on the Stage



UNDER THE MISTLETOE.

Seeing Santa Claus

By LAURA FROST ARMITAGE.

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EARL (to Ruth)—Oh, I just wish we could see him.

Fred—See whom?

Ruth—Why, Santa Claus. Earl and I have just been talking about him, and we were wishing we could get a peep at him once.

Gladys—Oh, I wouldn't like to!

Dorothy—Harry and I tried it last year. We came down and hid in the front hall but papa found us and sent us to bed.

Fred (after thinking awhile)—I've thought of something. Santa Claus wouldn't come in if he should spy us, but if he thought we were not real children he might. Couldn't we fool

him by making believe we were Mother Goose children right out of the book?

Dorothy—How could we do that?

Fred—We could dress like them and then stand perfectly still as if we were made of wax or something, just the way you do in a tableau, you know. He might think it was some kind of a show of wax figures.

Earl—Oh, my! I couldn't keep as still as that.

Harry—You could if you really wanted to see Santa Claus.

Earl—Oh, I will! I will! See me! (Poses.)

Gladys—Will we have to stand so very long?

Fred—Oh, not very, very long! We must all be ready before 12 o'clock. We must dress like Mother Goose children, and I'll fix you in your places. I'll be Boy Blue. We can find some dress-up clothes in the attic.

Harry—I think I'll be Jack Horner. I can have a pie.

Dorothy—I want to be Bopoop. A cane with a hook handle will do for a crook.

Gladys—May I be Miss Muffet?

Earl—What can Ruth and I be?

Fred—You might be Jack and Jill and carry a pail of water. An empty pail will do. Now let's be off and see what we can find. Then we'll go to bed, and I'll be awake, and after papa

and mamma go upstairs I'll call you, and we'll come down very softly. (Exeunt.)

II.
(Children come uptoeing in in costume, stockings in hand.)

Fred—Now, we'll hang our stockings first. (All hang them.) Then we'll get into our places. Bopoop, you stand here. Hold your crook so. Miss Muffet, you must sit on this footstool, and you must be eating. Put your spoon to your lips, so. Jack Horner, get into that corner and hold up your thumb with the plum on it. Jack and Jill, stand over here and take the pail between you. I will stand here and hold my horn to my mouth, so. Now, we mustn't move our eyes. It's getting late. Now, all ready! (All pose.)

Ruth (after awhile)—Oh, dear! This pail is so heavy even if it is empty.

All—Sh!

Gladys (after awhile)—How my arm aches!

All—Sh!

Earl (yawns aloud.)

All—Sh!

Harry—My thumb is tired of standing up.

Dorothy—I'm so sleepy (yawning).

All—Sh!

Jack Horner's hand drops, then his head. Bopoop drops crook and leans against wall. Jill lets go of pail and slides to floor. Jack soon does the same. Miss Muffet's head drops forward. Boy Blue's eyes close and horn falls. This rouses him for a moment, but his eyes soon close again, and he leans against the wall.)

Enter Santa Claus. (All fast asleep.)

Santa Claus—Ah! Well, well, well! Some of the children of my old friend, Mother Goose. But what are they doing here? (Walks about and looks at them closely.) Ah! I know these children. They're not Mother Goose's family. Ah! I see what they are up to. They're waiting to see me, and they don't want me to know them. But they can't fool this old fellow. Just as if he didn't know every child in the world. I've found children waiting for me many a time, but they always fall asleep and miss me. I'll fill the stockings, and won't they be surprised when they wake up and find they've missed me after all. (Fills stockings, then puts toy or candy into Miss Muffet's bowl and into Jack and Jill's pail.) Now I must be off. But I believe I'll try that horn of Boy Blue's once. (Blows and runs off, dropping horn near door. Children rouse up a little at sound, then fall back into former position.)

III.
Morning.—Fred (trounging)—Oh, I say! Wake up! What are you all asleep for?

Harry—Who's been asleep?

Dorothy (rubbing eyes)—Not I.

Gladys—I was almost asleep.

Earl (yawning)—Did he come?

Ruth (almost crying)—I was so sleepy. Did you all see him?

Others—Oh, no, no!

Fred—Well, I'm afraid we were all asleep. But I heard him. He blew on a big horn.

Harry and **Dorothy**—I heard him.

Gladys—And there's your horn, Fred, over by the door. He blew on that.

Ruth—See what's in our pail! (Holding it up.)

Gladys—And in my bowl!

Harry—And see the stockings!

All—Oh, oh, oh! (All run to get the stockings.)

Dorothy—Oh, why couldn't we have kept awake?

Fred—Well, we've missed him this time sure. But next year we'll try it again, and we'll all keep awake.

All—Yes, indeed, we will.

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